

**WHAT IS CLAIMED:**

- 5           1.     A method for treating a gastrointestinal motility disorder in a mammal  
              which comprises administering to the mammal a therapeutically effective  
              amount of interleukin-11.
- 10           2.     The method of claim 1, wherein the therapeutically effective amount of  
              interleukin-11 comprises 1 to 1000  $\mu\text{g/kg}$  body weight.
3.     The method of claim 1, wherein the interleukin-11 is administered daily  
              until improvement of the disorder is observed.
- 15           4.     The method of claim 1, wherein the interleukin-11 is administered daily  
              until remission of the disorder is observed.
5.     The method of claim 1, wherein the gastrointestinal motility disorder is  
              gastroesophageal reflux disease.
- 20           6.     The method of claim 1, wherein the gastrointestinal motility disorder is  
              post-operative adynamic ileus.
7.     The method of claim 1, wherein the mammal is a preterm infant and the  
25           gastrointestinal motility disorder is intolerance to oral feeding.
8.     A method of preventing the onset of a gastrointestinal motility disorder in  
              a mammal which comprises administering to the mammal a therapeutically  
              effective amount of interleukin-11.
- 30           9.     The method of claim 8, wherein the therapeutically effective amount of  
              interleukin-11 comprises 1 to 1000  $\mu\text{g/kg}$  body weight.

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10. The method of claim 8, wherein the gastrointestinal motility disorder is selected from the group consisting of: gastrointestinal reflux diseases, post-operative adynamic ileus and intolerance to oral feeding.

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11. A method of increasing the plasma concentration of motilin in a mammal which comprises administering to the mammal a therapeutically effective amount of interleukin-11.

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12. A method of increasing the tissue concentration of motilin in the duodenal mucosa of a mammal which comprises administering to the mammal a therapeutically effective amount of interleukin-11.

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13. A method of improving the contractile parameters of the neuromuscular layer of the gut wall of a mammal afflicted with colitis which comprises administering to the mammal a therapeutically effective amount of interleukin-11.